other Gê tribes and of the Bororo, but they differ from their northern neighbors in the ground plan and framework of the houses, in the manner of burial, and in the use of the sleeping hammock. The Tapirapé resemble various tribes of the upper Xingu basin in the layout of the houses around a ceremonial house and in the use of the sleeping hammock, but differ from them in the shape of the houses and in the comparative size of the dwellings versus the ceremonial house, as well as in the custom of burying the dead inside the house. It is also worth noting the difference between the elongated-dome shape of the Tapirapé and northern Kayapó houses and the beehive shape of the Kayamo-Chavante dwellings on the Rio das Mortes. [Ed., end of Vol. 111.]

Chapter 8

[112:51] Subsistence

The Tapirapé derive their subsistence largely from farming and fishing. This does not keep them from using any opportunity they may have to gather wild fruits and honey and to hunt. The fruits of certain trees are plucked as they chance to be found along the way, but those of the tucum-açú (Astrocharyum spec.), called chavana in Tapirapé, are sought out systematically during the month of October. In September or thereabouts, the men equip themselves with axes and gourds and go into the forest to look for honey. During the same month they catch turtles and turtle eggs. At different times of the year they gather the larvae of various kinds of wasps (kaua, "wasp" in Tapirapé) and kill animals both small and large. Although some of them hunt at all times of the year, February and March are the special hunting months, for this is the time when game, especially wild pigs, armadilloes, and pacas, is crowded in by the rising waters.

During my stay in Tampiitaua, there was only one man who preferred hunting to any other occupation. He was Kanchovani, a Tapirapé about 32 years of age who was more slender in body than many other members of his tribe. While the others worked in their

4: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940) 1943
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veral weeks on the Araguaya. Frequently shamans, through their dreams, learn and then tell the Tapirapé where large bands of wild pigs can be found and advise them how to approach the band (21). 756 787 [224]

The cleansing of food may be accomplished by the shaman by tasting it or by blowing smoke or his breath over it. Several times each year these rites are performed over the first fruits of harvests to insure their safety before the people taste the crop. In December the first ears of the new maize are picked and presented to a strong shaman who then gives them to his wife to cook. At sundown of the day on which this is done the shaman walks to the central plaza followed by his wife, who carries the cooked maize and places it in a pile before him, ready for the ceremonies that will follow. In 1939, Panteri was the shaman who initiated this ceremony and he was joined by five other proved shamans. The people of the village gathered about this group of shamans who sat in a circle facing the maize. One by one the shamans took deep draughts from their burning pipes and blew the smoke over the maize. Then, one by one again, each pinched off a few grains from an ear and ate them. When the last had tasted the new maize, the ceremony was ended. The youngsters of the village then fell upon the pile of maize; the crop had been tasted by the shamans and found free from danger for the people. The next day maize was eaten in all houses. 276 756 796 241

A similar ceremony is performed in August or September with the first wild honey of the season, and again about January or February when new corn is ground to make the thick beverage kaui. I did not hear of such "tasting of first fruits" by shamans for other garden crops and informants were unable to remember any one occasion when shamans had found new maize or honey too dangerous for consumption by the people. [222]

Again, each year in the first months of the rainy season when the new crop of maize is threatened by the first heavy rains and electrical storms, Tapirapé shamans must "fight" against Thunder and his mi- 756 789

(21) Many such prophecies are found wanting, and several times I heard people speak of a shaman's prophecy as a "lie". Often prophecies are only made known to people after events have proved them true.

476 thundering noise, dragging along in its fall its weaker companions.

Every once in a while, a voice was heard behind the trees. One [222] could not see who it was, but the call sounded very close. Immediately, the boys rushed to the spot where the voice came from. Soon they returned with their arms full of bananas. They ran jubilantly toward us and distributed them.

These bananas reached a length of 30 centimeters and a middle [197] [482] circumference of 15 to 20 centimeters. The men brought them in hampers close to the working area, but never came out of the woods into the garden with their load.

The skin of the bananas was black, and their flesh was already 252 262 brownish and too soft. This is the condition in which the Tapirapé [222] [171] like them best. The fruits are gathered when green and buried at the spot where they grew. The Karajá do the same thing. In the sun-heated ground, the bananas reach the desired state of rottenness more quickly than if they were kept at home. Then, too, they are warm when taken out of the ground, and this endears them further to the Indians.

They are not peeled in order to be eaten. The tough skin is 264 opened a little at one of the tips, the tip is placed between the lips, and the skin slowly emptied by squeezing it with the fingers so that the pulp gradually enters the mouth. Kamairahó ate one banana after another. As for myself, I found them nauseating.

264 [108] The sun was already quite low when we left. We forged 476 ahead at a rapid pace, one behind the other on the narrow trail. We 462 were not far from the village when the path opened onto a small, 574 cleared, triangular space. The women sat in the corners of this space and watched us in silence. The women and girls had split into three groups which tallied with the work groups of their husbands and fathers. They had placed pots of food in the area in the same arrangement. [262] There were banana kãũĩ, peanut kãũi, cottonseed kãũĩ, toasted karáˊ, and many other good things. Each group ate only from the pots placed for it at a specific spot. There were smaller quantities for the Tãnãvé, because they were fewer. I was invited from all sides, and since I [123] was very hungry I did not spare the other two groups. Only when I was beginning to be satiated did I put down, with a great show of surprise, the pot of banana soup of the Anantxá from which I had just partaken, and declared that I was a Tãnãvé. This fact, however, did not seem to be of great importance to my hosts.

12: Wagley & Galvão E-5 (1939-1940) 1948
SP22 Tapirapé SP22

Tapirapé do not use the tipiti (the long woven tube in which the water is squeezed from poisonous manioc), but squeeze poisonous manioc with their hands. The pulp is then spread out on a platform in the sun to be thoroughly dried. The flour is toasted in a clay pot over a very hot fire.

Wild foods.—Meat is a definite luxury to the agricultural *Tapirapé*. Monkeys, armadillos, forest fowls, cuati (*Nasua* sp.), and both kinds of peccary (*Tayassus tajacu* and *T. pecari*) are occasionally killed in the forest at any time during the year. The hunting and fishing season, however, is from June through October, when the savanna country is dry. The savannas are extraordinarily rich with game. Plains deer, wild pigs, peccary, and wild duck, and geese near the drying swamps are plentiful.

Fish are shot with the bow and arrow and stupefied with timbó (*Paullinea pinnata* or *Serjania* sp.) in the almost dry streams and lakes. The village is almost deserted in September and October, after garden sites have been cleared and before planting. Men, women, and children move out to the plains country near the Tapirapé River and set up a temporary camp. They collect turtle eggs and kill turtles in the river. They gather piqui fruit (*Caryocar vellosum*), andiroba (*Carapa guyanensis*), and other wild fruits, and, from October through November, they find wild honey both on the savanna and in the forest.

Hunting is done with the bow and arrow, but a club is used to finish the kill, especially wild pigs or jaguars.

HOUSES AND VILLAGES

The houses of a *Tapirapé* village form an oval around a large ceremonial men's house (tākana), which is forbidden to the women. Both the large men's house, approximately 20 by 65 feet (6 by 20 m.), and the residential houses, averaging 13 by 33 feet (4 by 10 m.), have a quadrangular floor plan with arched roofs made by bending flexible poles and tying them together over a roof beam (pl. 19, *bottom, left*). The walls and the roof are covered with leaves of buriti palm and wild banana.

In the surviving village, called Tampitawa, there were nine residential houses, each housing from four to eight simple families. Each family occupies a determined sector of the house where they cook, keep their belongings, and hang their sleeping hammocks. Household utensils, such as baskets, pots, hammocks, and gourds, are owned by the women of each simple family. Houses, though built by men, are said to be the property of the women of the house. The house frame is constructed cooperatively by all the men of the house. Each man covers the portion to be used by his wife and children.

Ideally, residence is matrilocal, and the house is inhabited by a group of closely related women and their husbands. The household leader is generally the husband of the oldest woman of the group (see p. 172). Owing perhaps to great depopulation and the accumulation of refugees

13: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940, 1953) 1964
SP22 Tapirape SP22

the next two months we had daily sessions, some very brief and others lasting two or more hours.

In October of 1939, some six months after my arrival, I found it necessary to leave the Village of the Tapirs to go to Furo de Pedra for supplies and to collect mail that was held there for me. Valentim Gomes and I had come up the Tapirapé River, a tributary of the Araguaia, pulled by an outboard motor belonging to an anthropological colleague who had since returned to the United States. Now we had to paddle ourselves downstream. We could expect little help from the sluggish current and since the river was so low, it might be necessary to haul our canoe through shallows. Malaria had left me weak and I doubted that I was equal to this strenuous task. Several Tapirapé men, including Champukwi, were anxious to accompany us, but having Indians with us in Furo de Pedra was not advisable. First, they were susceptible to the common cold, which among relatively uncontaminated peoples such as these American aborigines often turns into a serious, and even fatal, disease. Second, unaccustomed to clothes, money, many foods, and other Brazilian customs and forms of etiquette, they would be totally dependent upon us during our stay in this frontier community. Nevertheless, the temptation to have my best informant with me during the trip and during our stay in Furo de Pedra was great and so we agreed to take Champukwi.

The trip was made slowly. Two good frontiersmen in a light canoe could have made it in three days, but we took eight. Champukwi was of little help in the canoe; unlike the riverine tribes the Tapirapé are a forest people who know little about the water, and few of them had ever traveled by canoe. Champukwi was unusual in that he could swim. Although he had more endurance than I, his efforts at paddling endangered the equilibrium of our canoe. However, he could shoot fish with his bow and arrow. The dry season had driven game from the open savanna which borders the Tapirapé River so that we were able to kill deer, *mutum* (another species of large forest fowl), and a wild goose to supplement the less palatable fare we had brought with us. Each night we camped on a beach from which we were able to collect the eggs of a small turtle, the *tracaja*, that had been buried in the sand. Only the mosquitoes which swarmed during sundown and early evening marred our trip. The experience remains one of the most memorable